

U.S. Application No.: NEW
PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Attorney Docket: 3926.135

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please add the following paragraph after the title:

Cross Reference To Related Application

[0001] This application is a ***national stage*** of PCT/EP2003/002927 filed September 3, 2003 and based upon DE 102 41 593.5 filed September 5, 2002 under the International Convention.

Please replace paragraph [0002] with the following amended paragraph:

[0002] The invention relates to a method for the laser machining of coated sheets, ~~according to the preamble of patent claim 1.~~ A method of this type is already known from DE 44 07 190 A1.

Please replace paragraph [0007] with the following amended paragraph:

[0007] The invention is depicted, in relation to the method for the laser machining of coated sheets, in a method in which, on at least one side of at least one sheet, at least one topographical change protruding from the surface is generated by means of a laser directing a laser beam onto the surface by means of a scanner device, characterized in that the laser beam generates the at least one topographical change on that side of

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the at least one sheet which faces away from said beam, by continuously fusing or melting through this sheet in the region of its machining area, and/or in that the laser beam describes about the center of its machining area a narrowing spiral to be provided, by the features of patent claim 1. The further claims contain advantageous embodiments and refinements of the method according to the invention (patent claims 2 to 6).